



Historic Commissions

For Commission Use Only:
 Date Rec: _____
 Hearing Date: _____
 Certificate #: _____
 Monitor: _____

Application for Certificate

(Read attached instructions
before completing form)

Certificate Requested: **Appropriateness** – for work described herein

Minor project Major Project Demolition **Non-Applicability** – for the following reason(s):
 Not subject to public view

Maintenance, repair, or replacement using same design and materials Proposed
 change specifically excluded from review under Bylaw

Other: _____

Hardship – financial or otherwise and does not conflict substantially with
 the intent and purposes of the Bylaw

General Information:

Property Address 49 Academy Street

District Pleasant Street

Owner(s) Hilary & David Baldwin Email dbaldwin@mitre.org

Owner's Phone (h) 781-643-4833 (w) _____ (fax) _____

Owner's Address _____

Applicant (if not Owner) _____

Applicant's Phone (h) _____ (w) _____ (fax) _____

Applicant's Address _____

Applicant's Relationship to Owner _____

Contractor Paul Commons Phone _____

Architect _____ Phone _____

Dates of Anticipated Work: Start Apr 2024 Completion Apr 2024

Description of Proposed Work: (attach additional pages as necessary) Please include a description of how the proposed work (if a change or addition) is historically and architecturally compatible with the building and the District as a whole.

Reproduce decorative railing above front porch (I believe one was on the house prior to the addition of the sleeping porch c.1933-34)
 (see narrative) _____

*Narrative for 49 Academy Street
Addition of a decorative railing over front porch*



Hilary and David Baldwin
49 Academy St.
Arlington, MA

February 2024

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In 1896, George Albert Smith built his house on a lot next to his parents' home on Academy Street. His spouse Anna and he had three children and two maids living in the house. Sadly, his wife Anna died in 1912.

This is the only photo I've found in its original location.



If you squint, and use your imagination, one can see the lower front porch railing and a hint of an upper railing.

Sometime after the death his wife, George Smith and his children moved into his parents home.

In 1933 George Smith no longer wanted to see his old home, so he purchased the front yard lot next door and moved his house approximately 150 feet to the south on Academy St. The Smith Family continued to own the home until 1977.



According to Elizabeth Smith, “Daddy didn’t like looking out the library window and seeing his old house, so he bought the lot next door and had it moved.”

The house was moved onto the front yard of 51 Academy Street.

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When Elizabeth A. Smith died, she left the home to her long time caregiver Caroline Perkins.

Mrs. Perkins died in 2003. Hilary and I purchased the home at 49 Academy Street from the estate in 2004.

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The house had survived through benign neglect. It had not been maintained since 1934.

The bones were good and nothing had been discarded. The basement storage had windows, doors, shutters, storm windows, screens etc.



After debate, in 2004 we decided to remove the sleeping porch that had been added in 1934.

The load of the over-built room over the porch was considerably more weight than the columns and foundation should support.

At this time we left the interior French doors that had been added to access the sleeping porch.

When the sleeping porch was removed, we saw the ghost shadow of a railing post on the house.
(I neglected to photograph it.)



In 2021, using the original window sash that was discovered in the basement, we had the window reproduced and installed. (Evidence of the old window sill was found)

The next project is to reproduce an decorative over porch railing.

FYI: The foot print of the porch is ~ 19' x ~9'

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Examples decorative railings in the neighborhood



27 Jason St.



41 Jason St.



33 Academy St.



90 Jason St.



Proposed Style for Upper Railing

4.5 inch posts
1.25 inch balusters
1.25 spacing
Finial – Acorn (5.25")
Top of post 27"
Top of post w/ finial 32.25"
Top of railing 24"
Railing overall 22"
Deck to bottom rail 2"

Lower porch dimensions

Top of post 36"
Top of railing 32.5"
Railing overall 28.5"
Deck to bottom rail 4"
Wooden columns tapered to 6.5"
Rail to house - tapered pilaster ~9"
to ~6.5" x 2.5"

To me, our home is asymmetrically symmetrical

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Proposed Style
Option 2

Lattice pattern on section ends

4.5 inch posts
1.25 inch balusters
1.25 spacing
Finial - Acorn

Diamond pattern to
match diamond pane
windows on porch and
driveway side

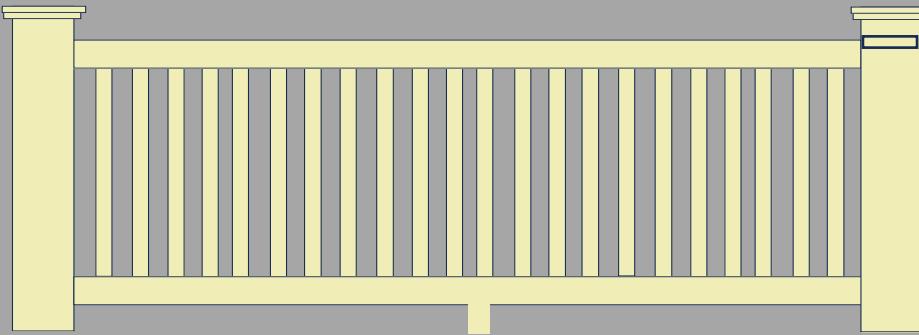
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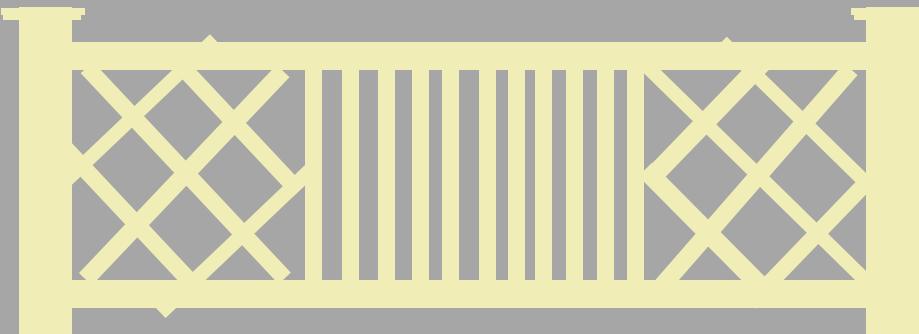
Proposed Style Option 3

Lattice pattern in center

4.5 inch posts
1.25 inch balusters
1.25 spacing
Finial - Acorn

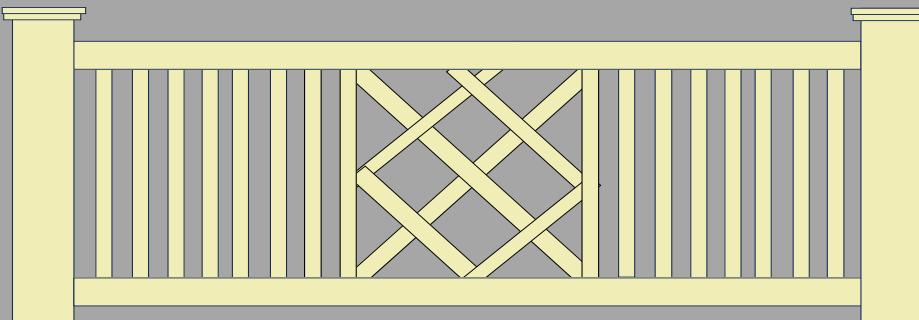


Railings, pilasters, and posts –
WindsorOne and red cedar

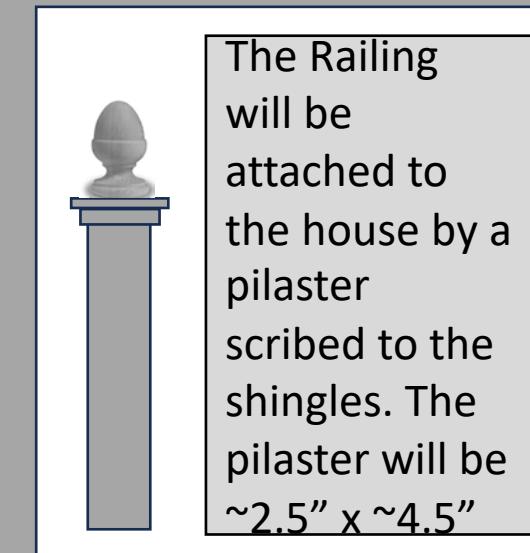


Option 1 Railing 22" high
2" off deck
Posts 4.5 inches sq.
Top and bottom rail to match existing
lower front porch rail style

Front porch pilaster top



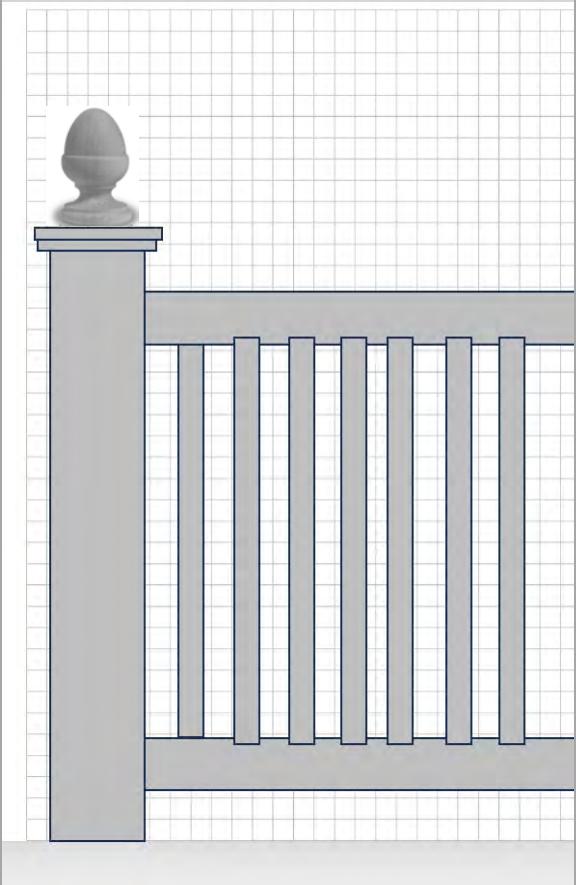
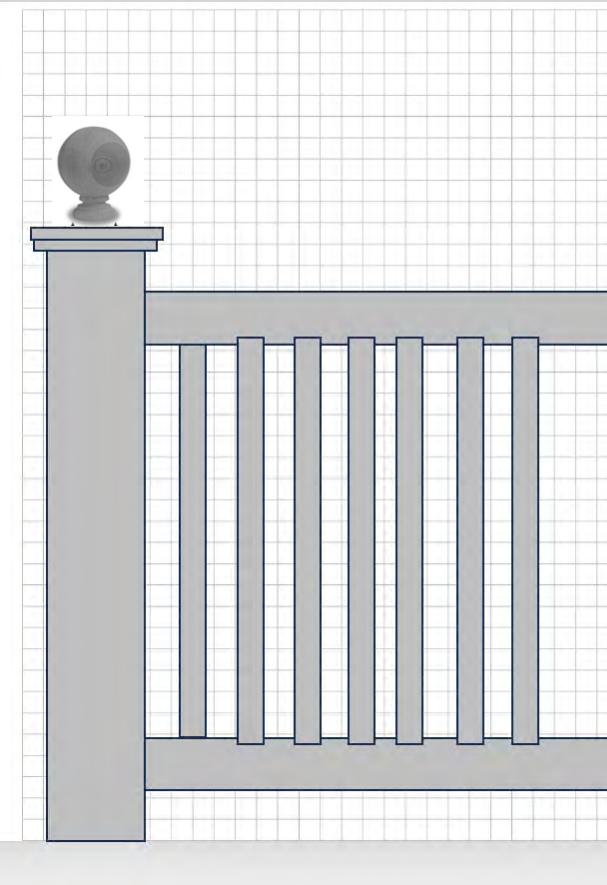
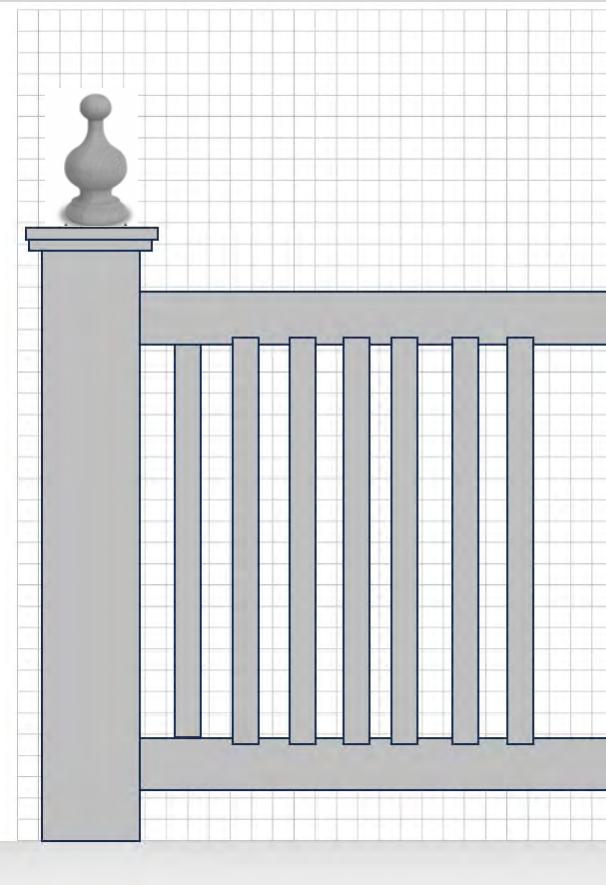
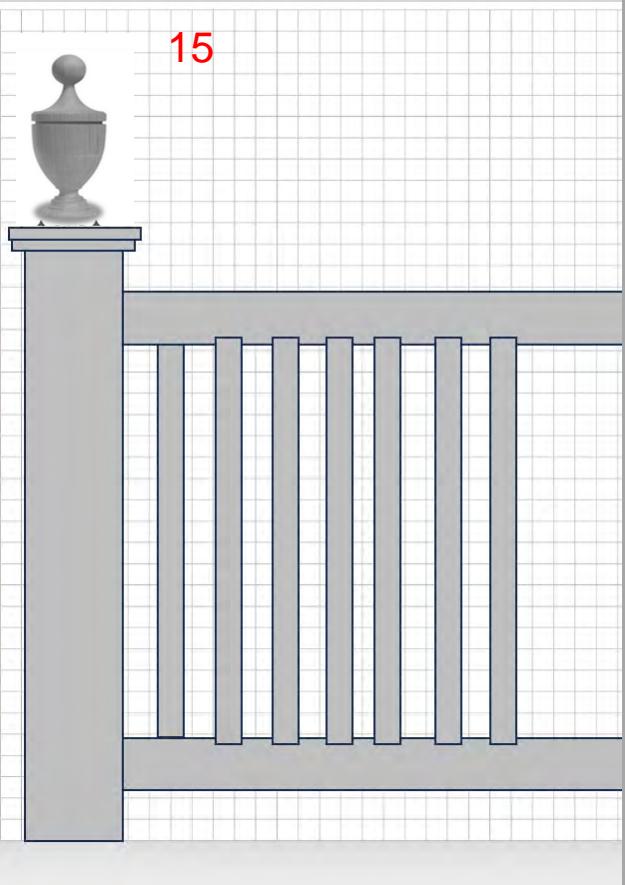
Option 2 Lower railing 29 " and 3" off deck
Upper railing 22" and 2" off deck



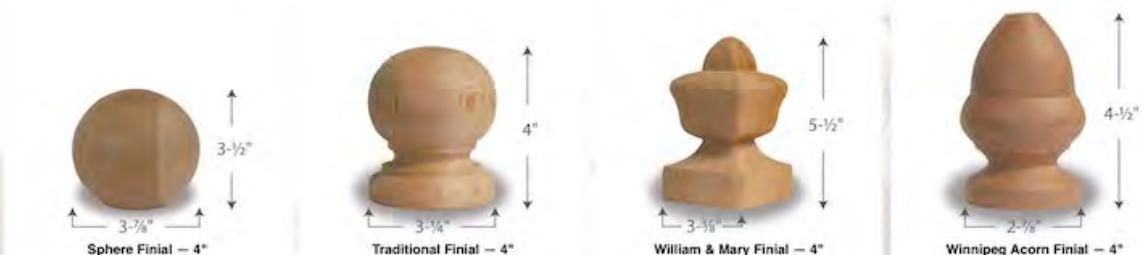
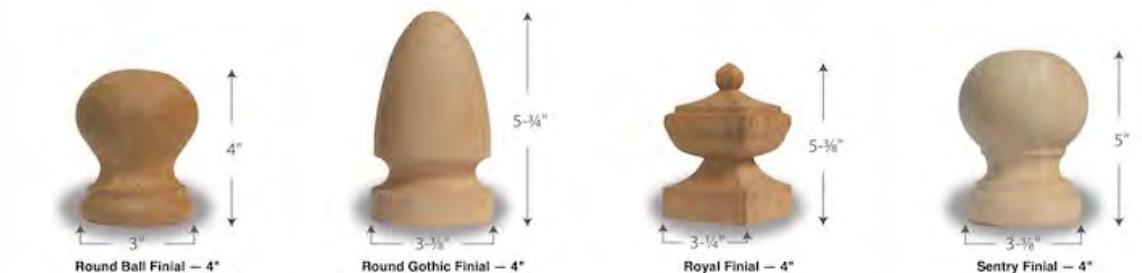
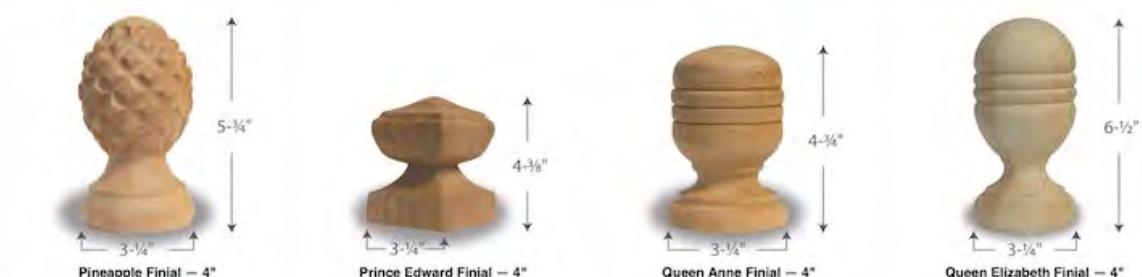
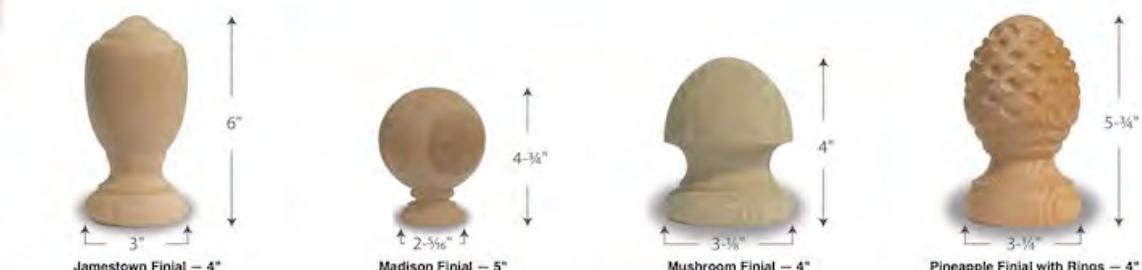
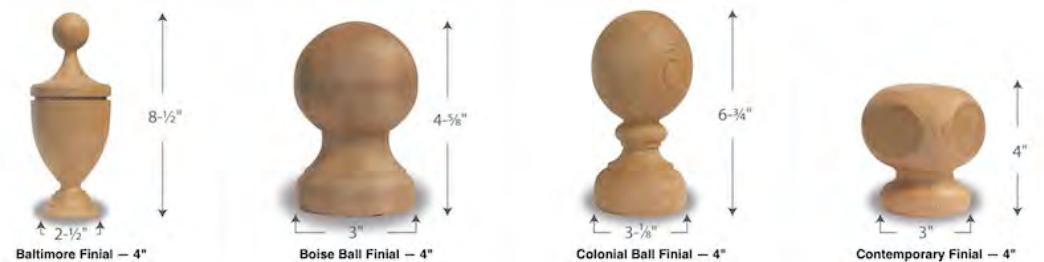
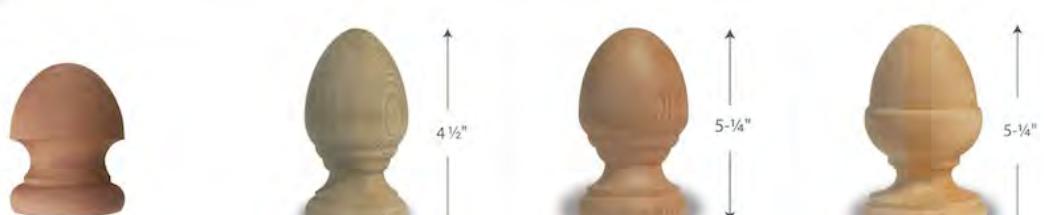
Should a $\frac{1}{2}$ finial top the pilaster?

Back porch pilaster top

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Possible Finial Designs -- The acorn finial (#4) matches 3rd floor knewel posts finial
-- The urn finial (#1) matches living room fireplace mantle



Floor level newel post heights are calculated to place the stair handrail in the center of the top block using the following formula:

Post Height = Bottom of Rail Height
+ (Rail \div 2)
+ (Top Block \div 2)
+ Cap Mold (If applicable)

